

ABSTRACT

A latch assembly is provided for an aircraft service pit having a lid frame formed with an access opening encompassed within an upwardly facing bearing ledge. The pit lid has a flat upper surface and is hinged at one edge at a horizontal axis of rotation relative to the lid frame. The pit lid has an opposite, latching edge. A latch mechanism is mounted on the latching edge of the pit remote from the horizontal axis of rotation and includes a latch mount embedded in the structure of the pit lid. The latch mount defines a latch guide path inclined downwardly from the flat upper surface of the pit lid and outwardly toward the latching edge thereof. A latch bolt, preferably having a T-shaped handle, is reciprocally mounted for movement in the latch guide path. The latch bolt preferably has a gripping end formed as a T-shaped handle that is accessible from the flat upper surface of the pit lid. The latch bolt also has an opposite, distal, bearing ledge-engaging end. A spring is compressed between the latch mount and the distal end of the latch bolt so as to urge the distal end of the latch bolt into engagement with a lip located at the underside of the seating rim formed by the bearing ledge of the pit lid support frame.